

A N
E P I S T L E

TO A

C L E R G Y M A N. *W*

By one of his PARISHIONERS.

Having a Form of Godliness, but denying the Power thereof: from such turn away. 2 TIM. iii. 5.

Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us by the Washing of Regeneration, and Renewing of the Holy Ghost. TIT. iii. 5.



L O N D O N :

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H L T

И. А. М. У. Я. Э. З. Э.

one of his 12 followers.



PUBLISHER to the READER.

IT may be proper just to premise, as well in point of information to the reader, as justice to the Author, that the following Epistle is the production of a poor woman (for whose benefit it is printed) of no better education than usually falls to the lot of working people: which consideration, it is hoped, will plead her excuse for any Inaccuracies that may be found either in the language or poetry.

BUT whatever defects there may be in her *Manner*, the *Matter* will be found agreeable to the Articles of the *Church of England*, of which she professes herself a member; and, we hope, also to the word of God, the great Standard and Criterion of Truth.

IF it should fall into the hands of any of the Clergy, besides the Reverend Gentleman to whom it was first directed ; they are requested, with the greatest respect to their honourable and important office, to imitate the *Bereans* *, in searching the scriptures whether those things are so : And I may also add, that they would be pleased to search the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies of the *Church of England* : And if these all speak the same thing, I flatter myself they will not reject a messenger of such important truths, in how mean a dress soever she makes her appearance. Happy for the author, she can appeal to all these authorities !

AND if so, what shall we say to those *Arminian* and *Socinian* Tenets which have crept in among us, placed themselves in the seat of judgment at the

* Acts xvii. 11.

the gate, and stole away the hearts of the people from the lawfully established doctrines of our Church? Is it not greatly to be wished they might be hung up and exposed to the infamy they justly deserve.

AND though no Clergyman or Minister whatever has any concern in, or is privy to, this publication; yet surely every minister who considers the value of souls, the charge of his great Master, and the eternal consequence of what he delivers from the pulpit, cannot be too careful in examining the word of God, nor too constant in earnest prayer that he may experience those blessings himself which he is called to preach to others, lest at the last day he should be found an hireling, and not a true shepherd of Jesus Christ.

THAT all of them may be led into the truth, their ministry abundantly

blest to the conversion and salvation
of their hearers and themselves, hap-
py here, and eternally happy in the
Kingdom of Glory hereafter, is the
wish and prayer of

Their sincere Friend,

And humble Servant,

The Publisher.

A N
E P I S T L E
T O A
C L E R G Y M A N.

REVEREND SIR,

PERMIT a Muse, unskill'd in learning's guise,
In simple Truth to offer her advice:
Plain simple Truth alone she makes her choice;
Then scorn her not, but listen to her voice.
Her Theme RELIGION, and the Truth her aim;
She shuns no danger, and she fears no shame.
Hear with attention what she has to say,
And then let candor judge her humble Lay.

THUS she begins—The name of Christ you own;
By *England's* Church ordain'd, you wear the gown;
Her doctrines to defend, the Scriptures teach,
And Free Salvation to your flock to preach.
This is your call——prove faithful to it then;
Serving your Lord, and teaching sinful men.

Show

Show them their sad estate——most sad indeed !
When to redeem their souls, their God must
bleed (a).

Tell them (by nature always prone to ill)
They fly from God and serve the devil still :
Slaves to his pleasure, with his husks they're fed,
And never hunger for the heav'nly Bread ;
But hug their chains : Bound to this wretched clod,
Their heav'n-born souls forget their Parent-God.
Show them, how by God's law they're all accurst (b),
And in his presence none accounted just (c) ;
All under condemnation. Tell them plain,
E'er they see heav'n, they must be *Born again* (d) ;
Their hearts, renew'd by the Almighty pow'r,
Must hate the world and sin, they lov'd so well
before (e).

This change must here on earth effected be,
Or nought remains but future misery.
Labour to rouse them from the sleep of sin,
And fire their souls eternal life to win :
To fly with haste to the atoning Blood,
To save them from their sins and wrath of God ;
Whose

(a) Acts xx. 28.

(b) Gal. iii. 10, 11.

(c) Ps. xiv. 2. Rom. iii. 10.

(d) John iii. 3.

(e) James iv. 4.

Whose broken law must have it's full demands (f),
 Or with uplifted sword stern justice stands
 Ready to strike the unrelenting blow,
 And doom them to the deep abyss of woe.
 Show them, that all the works themselves can do,
 Will never pay the debt immense they owe.
 All human works done since the world began
 Together join'd, can't save one sinful man (g):
 Far less to be compar'd, when all is done,
 Than a small taper to the mid-day sun,
 With what God's holy law does still require,
 Which reaches ev'ry word, thought and desire.
 Then sinful man, boast not thy righteousness;
 For Truth declares 'tis not the Wedding-Dress (b)
 Show them, that only faith in Christ will do
 To save their souls from misery and woe.
 For in God's word this truth confirm'd must stand,
 Believe, ye shall be sav'd (i) — believe not, you
 are damn'd:

That only faith can their release secure,
 Plain simple faith alone, unmix'd and pure,
 Purg'd from the dross of self, the world and sin (k),
 This faith alone can their salvation win (l).

B

HERE,

(f) Gal. iii. 10.

(g) Gal. ii. 16.

(b) Matt. xxii. 11.

(i) Mark xvi. 16.

(k) Acts xv. 9.

(l) Eph. ii. 8, 9.

HERE, sir, perhaps will an objection lay;
 “Why, have we not all faith (*m*)?” (many
 will say)

“Are not all Christians? Do not all believe?”

But ask the question—Pray what is your faith?

“What is our faith!” (perhaps they will reply)

“Why we believe that Christ was born--did die--

“To save the world from misery and woe.”

But tell them plainly—“This will never do:”

Tell them this faith is but historical,

Which *Devils Faith* our Homilies do call.

They too believe all this, and know it well;

And yet for all this faith, they are but devils still.

Without more faith than this, they have no claim

Nor part in Christ, altho’ they use his Name:

But unbelievers to this hour remain,

Under the curse, and doom’d to endless pain.

THEN fly, O fly to the redeeming Blood!

And get your pardon seal’d, and make your
 peace with God.

O fly for life! don’t stop, nor once look back,

Lest swift destruction should you overtake (*n*).

O fly to Christ the Saviour of mankind!

For short of him no happiness you’ll find.

Explain

(*m*) 2 Thess. iii. 2.

(*n*) Numb. xxxv. 11.
 Heb. vi. 18.

Explain to them the great necessity,
 That grafted into Christ they truly be :
 Made living branches of that glorious Vine,
 In him their sap and nourishment to find (o).
 An union with their God close to commence,
 To live and walk by faith, and not by sense (p).
 To have the Spirit of adoption giv'n (q),
 Sealing their hearts the happy heirs of heav'n (r) :
 To serve their God, like sons, by love compell'd,
 And not like slaves in servile bondage held (s) ;
 To know the Saviour their's, to find his pow'r
 Ruling within their hearts each day and hour (t) :
 To find God's Spirit witnessing with their's (u),
 They are his children, and with Christ co-heirs.
 To all in Christ God is a father dear,
 To all without he is a judge severe.

O then invite them to their only Friend,
 Whose love is boundless, and shall never end.
 What love like his can any creature show,
 Either in heav'n above, or earth below !
 Scarce for a friend cou'd one be found to die,
 Christ tasted death for man his enemy (w).

B 2

For

(o) John xv. 4.

(p) Rom. i. 17. 2 Cor. v. 7.

(q) Gal. iv. 5. Rom. viii. 15.

(r) Eph. i. 13. iv. 30.

(s) Gal. iv. 7.

(t) 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

(u) Rom. viii. 16.

(w) Rom. v. 7, 8.

For rebel-slaves the King his life lays down,
And by his Blood exalts them to his throne.

THEN, sinners, come—his mangled body view :
Behold your bleeding Lord—he bleeds for you (x).
Here your redemption's mighty debt is paid,
And your's the benefits by faith are made (y).
Believe in him—your sins shall be forgiv'n ;
All fear of hell cast out ; your hope of heav'n
Fix'd on a Rock that never can decay,
Tho' earth and heav'n itself should pass away (z).
Then will you find sweet peace and heav'nly joy
Which this world cannot give, nor yet destroy.
Such heart-felt peace will in your bosom flow,
As gives a taste of heav'n while here below.
Into your cup rich drops of cordial thrown,
To make the draught of life go sweetly down.
Tho' trials and temptations shou'd abound,
Secure in Christ, you 're fortify'd around :
Your sure defence nor winds nor storms can shock,
The house must stand—'tis founded on a rock (a).

O then invite them to the Sinner's Friend,
Whose love is boundless and shall never end ;
Tell them how ready Christ is to receive
All those who come and on his Name believe.

His

(x) Rom. v. 6, 8.

(y) Acts xvi. 31.

(z) Matt. xxiv. 53.

(a) Matt. vii. 24, 25.

His word is giv'n, it is a sin to doubt,
 Not one that comes to him will be cast out (b).
 It matters not if sinners great or small,
 Still come to him, he freely pardons all (c)
 Poor sinners only Jesus came to save;
 No righteous persons will he ever have (d),
 For sinners only did he shed his blood;
 Then pray, my friends, don't stay till you are good.
 Just as you are come to him—haste away,
 You wrong your souls if longer you delay.
 There's nought for you to do; *'tis finished*,
 Your Saviour cry'd, and bow'd his dying head!
 There's nought for you to do, but to believe
 On Christ, and all his benefits receive (e).
 Have you no faith? Why, faith is his to give (f),
 He bids you ask, and says you shall receive (g):
 Then boldly venture to the throne of grace,
 And, as the Lord commands you, seek his face (b).

Thus preach the gospel in its purity,
 And leave th' insipid task of dry morality.
 Within your Church the Homilies replace,
 And let our Articles your pulpit grace:

Observe

(b) John vi. 37.

(c) 1 Tim. i. 15.

(d) Matt. ix. 13. Rom. iii. 10.

(e) Acts xvi. 31.

(f) Heb. xii. 2.

(g) Luke xi. 9. Matt. vii. 7.

(b) Ps. xxvii. 8. and lxix. 32.
Matt. vii. 7.

Observe them well, read, study, ascertain,
 And to your hearers make the matter plain.
 For pray, dear sir, what does it signify
 Still to be preaching dull morality :
 For should you preach it till your heart-strings ache,
 You never by it will one Christian make (i)
 But if they are made Christians first ; why, then
 There is no doubt, they will prove moral men (k) :
 Sound faith in Christ once taught, and truly known,
 Is a sure means to pull down Satan's throne *.

THEN boldly in your Master's cause engage,
 To stem the torrent of a vicious age.
 Fear not the face of man, but fear thy God ;
 Their frowns are light, [not so his iron rod (l)]
 Don't palliate any crimes of great or small,
 Nor [sinful vices harmless pleasures call.
 Are *Cards* and *Dancing* harmless ? fie for shame !
 They are unworthy of the Christian-name (m) :
 Call'd

(i) 1 Cor. iii. 11.

(l) Psalm ii. 9.

(k) Eph. ii. 10.

(m) Eph. ii. 2, 3.

* We are made the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. *Gal.* ii. 26. We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. 1 *Pet.* i. 5. Our hearts are purified by faith. *Acts* xv. 9. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 1 *John* v. 4. By the shield of faith are all the fiery darts of the wicked quenched. *Eph.* vi. 16. Faith worketh by love. *Gal.* v. 6. And love is the fulfilling of the law. *Rom.* xiii. 10. Without faith it is impossible to please God, for whatever is not of faith is sin. *Rom.* xiv. 23.

Call'd to the Judgment-Seat with Cards in hand,
 Pray tell me, fir, what chanced'y'e think we stand?
 Or from a ball suppose the foul takes flight,
 Pray do you think its lamp would be a light?
 No, certainly; no oil would there be found (s).
 But darkness horrible on all sides round (o).
 Let conscience say what names we ought to give
 To carnal pleasures, wherein many live:
 Why pomps and vanities we must them call,
 And in our Baptism we renounc'd them all:
 And while we follow them, we carnal are,
 Unworthy of the Christian name we bear.

(s) Matt. xxv. 3.

(o) Matt. xxv. 30.

F I N I S.

Call'd to the Judgment-seat with Cards in hand,
I say all are fit, what chance'd, yet think we stand?
Or from a ball suppose the soul takes flight,
I say do you think its lamp would be a light?
No, certainly; no oil would there be found (a).
But darkness horrible on all sides round (a).
Let conscience say what answer we ought to give
To eternal pleasures, wherein many lives
Why ports and vanities we must them call,
And in our Baptism we resound'd them all,
And while we follow them, we eternal are,
Unworthy of the Christian name we bear.

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(a) Matt. xxv. 34. (b) Matt. xxv. 35.

THE END